

XIII MAILER'S MALICE FROM HIS MENDACITY MADHOUSE

If this or any of these 828 pages of travesty is "logic" then the madhouse should be emptied.

Earlier referring to Yuri Merezhinsky I noted that one of Mailer's tricks was to skip around and that by the time he returned to a subject, after all the irrelevant junk with which he stuffed his readers' minds they could not keep what he's said earlier in mind. So, as this simply awful Volume ploughs to an end, and it is simply awful despite the raves of all the hacks in their reviews, Mailer has a chapter with as inappropriate a title as a corrupted mind skilled with words could conceive. It is "Veracity." (pages 332 ff)

Mailer says that with the bulk of his Minsk interviews completed, he "still had one big problem." What his big problem was is his own self-description and characterization: "It was whether to give any credence to ^{Yuri} Yuri Merezhinsky's account of his relations with Marina."

In this formulation he accredits Yuri's obvious lies.

So they decide to reinterview Yuri. What is quoted before this apparently was not enough to convince them. Or is it that they were that desperate for something they could regard as significant they subjected themselves to it. Leading up to it they report what they did not include earlier where it belonged, that their Yuri was also a common thief, and a cheap thief at that. Mailer tells the story of "Yuri, Kosta and Sasha" of his "group" who were working on a collective farm one summer. They then stole "a large piece of saló." Saló is known in this country as hog fatback. In the Mailer account it is "high-grade pork fat and very tasty if eaten with pickled cucumbers, bread and vodka. A thin slice of saló coated your stomach. You could then drink more. Saló cost very very little" and that "big" piece it turns out fit easily in a pocket. (pages

That Yuri got away with it when hauled before the Komsomol when he was a medical student apparently established his bona fides with Mailer because he then interviewed Yuri again, with Yuri's mother, the honored scientist, in the room for some of that interview. Mailer labors through page after page of it with Yuri calling his mother a liar repeatedly, no doubt increasing his credibility to Mailer, and with her showing that he has been a liar all his life. This is how Mailer grinds it down:

The interviewers could wonder if Yuri would ever forgive his mother for revealing that he was a liar on a prodigious scale and so virtually all of what he had told them about Marina and himself was doubtless not true. Ambiguous--since it seemed as if he had seen her to some little degree--but probably not true. Experience bore the same relation to his memory as facts to high romance.

These are Mailer's words on page 343. They are not words I use to indict him. Indeed, in an honest world, especially an honest literary world, these would qualify as last words for Mailer and his book.

After all Mailer has done to ruin Marina's reputation and to embarrass her, her children and her husband and, when they are old enough, her five grandchildren, he now, after that unmitigated evil, in his own words describes his source, his basis for all his disgraceful behavior and writing, as "a liar on a prodigious scale."

Schiller and Mailer are sorry for him and "wonder" if he "could ever forgive his mother for revealing ~~it~~," that he was "prodigious liar."

As we have seen, only to a frustrated, failed Mailer was the mother's confirmation needed. It was apparent, very obvious, without her confirmation.

So, this time having the unnamed Schiller with him, Mailer writes what Yuri told the interviewers "about Marina and himself doubtless was not true." Some they evaluate as "ambiguous" and they refer merely to the fact that he and Marina had met, no more, before repeating, this time with a moderating word added, what Yuri told then as "probably not true."

What more does a twice-Pulitzer author need to use "prodigious" lies for unhidden character assassination?

Which is, as we have seen he did, much more extensively than here is indicated.

Mailer's case against Marina, the case he visibly, deliberately contrived, has as its and Mailer's source a man Mailer himself describes as "a liar on a prodigious scale."

How then describe this experienced, mature, much honored writer who could and did use this "liar on a prodigious scale" as Mailer did?

An inappropriate, perhaps uncouth, pun suggests itself but for this can anything be uncouth or inappropriate?

This is Pukelitzer stuff;

Hideous and nauseating.

Throughout this chapter I followed Mailer's mustering of what his witnesses told Schiller when he interviewed them as Mailer uses and misuses those interviews as the basis for his character assassination of Marina Oswald. One reason I used that approach was to make it obvious that if Mailer had nothing else at all his denunciation of her has no basis in reason for what he wrote and implied and stated about her allegedly questionable morals. Assuming there is relevance at that.

It is ^{NOT} ~~nt~~ because of Mailer's childishness in seeking to hide elsewhere in his book, not in the Part in which it belongs, what is as thoroughgoing a self-denunciation of his writing and of himself as a writer can admit to without boasting of it.

Rather is it because Mailer's own self-denunciation deserves the emphasis I give it by adding it after the chapter in which I show that in his entire Part he has no evidence that a decent man or a decent writer would even consider

using. That magnifies his offense against all decency and all concepts of decency of Mailer's dishonesty.

Mailer's own words elsewhere in the book, as we just saw, are that he could not believe a word from Merezhinsky, yet he used them as the basis for characterizing Marina as a whore who had been expelled from Leningrad over that; for being so anxious for sex that she had her legs spread all the time; that she forced so much of it on Yuri and on his "group" that they got "bored" with it and other such libels that in and of themselves cannot be believed.

These are simply horrible things to say about a woman. They are even more so when she is a grandmother. And it is incredible that any man, any writer, would say that based on the word of the man he admits cannot be believed. Thus to emphasize that I separated Mailer's sneaking it in elsewhere in the book where he also admitted that Merezhinsky's mother, honored scientist that she was, referred to him and his lying in such words that Mailer himself paraphrased them as portraying him as a "prodigious liar."

All of this is within my experience unequalled in mendacity in writing. It is also unequalled in any writer's self-condemnation.

So, it deserved separating for emphasis, so the reader could focus on it alone, without the other reflections of Mailer's monumental dishonesty intruding upon the proof positive that his permeating mendacity is not by accident.

But it is not the worst as it is not alone in being addressed elsewhere in those more than 800 pages rather than where it belongs in any proper organization of a book in a childish attempt to hide it while pretending to be honest.

All of this mendacity is based upon Merezhinsky's statement that Marina was expelled from Leningrad as a whore and his embellishments of that, which Mailer misused as Merezhinsky used them.

What makes what follows, what I have again separated for emphasis and for the reader's consideration of it standing by itself, is absolutely incredible. Writing it is the only difficulty I can remember in writing for years.

As I indicated earlier, in recent years my purpose has been put on paper as much of a record for our history as is possible for me without regard for what writers usually give careful thought and attention to, the writing. Polish-
ing writing and getting as much as possible on paper are opposites. Without an agent, without a publisher and with the long history of publisher refusal to even consider responsible, accurate writing about the assassination, as with my earlier writing of my later years I have no reason to anticipate any publication of this. So, I've been rushing to complete this work by just getting it on paper.

It is because of this that I am perplexed at the difficulty I have in getting this on paper. It is not a complicated story. It is simple. It is without any question at all both simple and unequivocal. Yet I've discarded at least a dozen beginnings of this simple story. In thinking about it and trying to tell myself why I was perplexed. This is the only writing in this book that I've had to stop for and to wonder about to myself. I spent much of a morning on unsatisfactory beginnings and in thinking to try to tell myself why it has been so difficult to get into it.

Finally I realized what it must be.

It is like trying to make sense in a madhouse.
That, too, is not easily understood, is also part of the madhouse scenario.

What I point out here, and there is more, ever so much more some of which we come to, had to be no less obvious to many at Random House than it was to me. Assuming what its record reflects, that after it became a publishing empire within a publishing empire, its standards changed, as did what it published, how could all those involved in its publication of this utterly worthless and meaningless book not have had pause in reading only what I ^{draw} ~~draw~~ attention to here?

The editors on the senselessness of it and its depravity if they were not also concerned about the litigation it enticed?

The lawyers who had to see what I report above and had to recognize that it held to disproof of what Mailer alleged libeling Marina. The lawyers had to wonder whether she would sue and whether the cost and other damage to Random House would be great. Did they not have cause to wonder whether knowing the truth he lied about in his book Mailer was reflecting and really making for her lawyers the case for malice if Marina was held to be a "public figure", particularly when she had nothing at all to do with her being so public, when all she wanted was to be left alone, in peace, to live her life with her family?

The answer is a legal decision but it seems impossible that Random House's house counsel did not at the least raise this question. Especially its second-ranking staff counsel, a woman, Lesley Oelsner. Can a woman have been so insensitive to the great and deliberate harm done to another women when it was, from the book alone, so deliberate and so knowingly false and dishonest?

(Obviously, Random House had no authentic peer review, the norm with serious nonfiction, especially on controversial subjects. This book could not get any legitimate peer review recommendation to publish.)

Of course, there is also the possibility of what is not known, not advertised, that Random House gave Mailer an enormous "advance" it wanted to try to recoup. The "advance" is against royalties. If the book is accepted the advance is not refundable and then it must earn in royalties at least as much as the advance for there not to be that loss. If it is accepted, the possibility of a lawsuit looms.

For Random House not to sustain a loss that could be a very big loss it had to sell a very large number of books. And with Mailer's excitement over what he boasted he would get, the KGB's "secrets", Random House might have given him a very large advance.

Then, too, there was Schiller's record of making money in very big

chunks, very big.

Random House cannot not have not realized that what Mailer turned in was at the very best a very bad book that without major advertising and promotion had no chance of making money, which can be to say of avoiding a large loss, on Mailer's name alone.

One way of reducing if not eliminating a large loss is to invest heavily in advertising and promotion. Random House had every reason to believe that Mailer would be at the least welcome on the major TV shows that can and do promote books and as we have seen with such books never ask any real or potentially embarrassing or hurtful questions. But the costs of all that travel do mount up and are not always recorded. ^{Jerred}

Perhaps also Random House had reason to anticipate the unquestioning adulations of this very bad book by hack reviewers.

The fear of loss can explain the very large advertising costs Random House assumed in its advertising. The full-page ad in The Washington Post about which I wrote above the moment I saw it was duplicated elsewhere, particularly where it costs most and can do most good, in The New York Times. Each paper has a weekly best-seller list. Getting on them, particularly that of the Times, is the biggest boost in sales a book can get.

Yet all aspects of this weird business do suggest the madhouse. None of it makes any sense at all unless the profit expected from Mailer's name to begin with and then the extraordinarily very expensive advertising campaign led Random House to believe its best option was to go ahead with this very bad book. But, calmly examined, all of this and more remain beyond belief.

And no less beyond any question at all.

Mailer slipped his "prodigious liar" acknowledgment in long after his denunciation of ^{Mariya} her as a whore who was expelled from Leningrad for whoring and escaped the gulags and chopping trees down there only because of her uncle's influence as a respected official of what in this country would be the Department of the Interior.

But it is at the very beginning of the book, well in advance of his assault on Marina, that Mailer put onto paper an even more incredible admission.

Marina told him that she had been raped. That also is not in Mailer's Part in which he says he addresses her "loves".

How painful it must have been for Marina to face such questions, to respond and to have her truthful response totally ignored.

Naturally, Mailer being the Mailer of this travesty, he has her denial, too, away from where it belongs.

After five days of Schiller's ugly and insensitive probing and prodding for what could enable them to ignore the disproof that he and Mailer had of all they had decided to use to ruin Marina, it turns that in referring to them as "^{perverts}sex maniacs" she was not only courageous, she understated.

Yet before Mailer put a single word of paper for this book, he knew that Marina, as little more than a girl, had been raped. Mailer had the admission of that from the woman who arranged it, who actually sold Marina in secret.

We saw Mailer's separation into chapters ^{some} so brief they do not take up a full page in his Part IV indictment of Marina for her "loves". But with all the names Mailer gives there, including for most of his chapter titles, Irina is not one of them.

At the beginning Mailer gives a short biography of Marina. This is that what he had on page 37 of what he originally conceived as Oswald in Minsk and here entitles Volume One: Oswald in Minsk with Marina. It is from Mailer's Part I, its chapter titled "White nights":

... That was when she was staying with Irina, who took her out one night on a double date with a client, an Afghani, who tricked Marina into coming up to his hotel room. He said he was going right out again, would she come with him just for a minute and a bite to eat while he changed clothes. Then, he raped her. He took her by force, and that was how she lost her virginity. Afterward, he said, "I didn't know you were a virgin. I want my money back." That was how she found out he had paid Irina in advance. After this Afghani had put her out of his room, Irina

said, "Well, what do you expect? Do you think you can go around with me forever, and eat, and do nothing for it?" And then Irina's *mother* spoke to her as well.

She felt she was a fallen woman. ...

Knowing this, and knowing it from the best possible source in the world, Schiller was the monster who could pummel and press and persecute poor Marina in her grandmotherhood trying without success to entice her into an admission of what was not true that they could use against her.

Mailer was no less a monster in human form, for all his honors and those Pulitzers he shames in knowing the truth yet nonetheless sets out to defame Marina knowing full well how corrupt and subhuman he was being.

Of course, I wondered about this, about how could Mailer so debase himself with all that fame behind him, how he could risk condemning himself into the future with such deliberate, intended and essentially purposeless evil. It did him no apparent good to libel Marina. There is nothing in the book that can be contorted into anything that can provide motive for what, with malice aforethought, he actually did to her.

One possibility is that Mailer himself is mad. One can point to his almost killing his first wife with a knife to reflect unbalance. But this is neither the time nor the place for what I have never practiced, amateur shrinkery. So there is no point in recalling all the crazy things Mailer has ever done and said. Voluminous as they are. They can be used for other purposes but not with by other than an accredited professional for assessing the state of his mind when he wrote and promoted this book.

What remains in any effort to make any kind of sense of this unprecedented self-condemnation, which despite all the unthinking auditory reviews of it is Mailer's sad Tales really is, is the influence of his "associate", Schiller?

Schiller, as we saw earlier, beginning with his knowingly corrupt and dishonest Capitol record that his then hired writer expanded with more corruption and dishonesty into the book based on that record. As I at that point said, to refer to Schiller as what he used as that book's title, "Scavengers", is to

demean hyenas and vultures because they at least do serve some useful purpose. There is nothing useful for other than making him rich and famous in what Schiller does and has done. He is a commercializer and a promoter and Mailer did become in effect his hired hand.

Did Mailer become Trilby to Schiller's Svengali?

What is Mailer's literary record from the time Schiller hooked as second best for his teats-and-tushie first-known literary association they had that merged as the book Marilyn in their exploitation of Marilyn Monroe, those naked pictures of her that Schiller lucked into and that "Marilyn" kit of things about her he sold?

Mailer had one successful book of his own in the almost two decades after he hired on for Marilyn. Marilyn appeared in 1973.

That one success was Harlot's Ghost, which appeared in 1991.

After Marilyn Mailer did Schiller's The Fact of Graffiti (1974), the Executioner's Song (1980) that got that Pulitzer but nothing else of any consequence.

Can it be that the imaginative Mailer had run dry on his own? Burned out?

That to be able to produce anything worthy of any attention he was latched to Schiller and the vile material that is his stock in trade?

There is no way of knowing. But other than if he degenerated into madness of one kind or another, unless he did run dry and unless he became dependent upon Schiller to be able to produce anything worth any attention, there seems to be no ready explanation of his despicable writing, especially about de Mohrenschildt and more about Marina in his so very sad tome that is really Mailer's Tale; not Oswald's.

Why he did it may be a question.

But what he did is not in question at all.

(Extra space)

Recounting what is in every sense Marina's remarkable achievement when little more than a girl, alone and without funds or the means of getting them, in a strange country whose language she did not know, with two infant girls, she nonetheless did survive and she educated her daughters so they could successfully face life on their own.

She did not do it all alone, however, or without help. The American people, touched by her plight, poured out their hearts and their help to her. As then was unknown and did not get to be known for a decade and a half, when I got the FBI's records in one of my dozen or so lawsuits, is that the FBI intercepted and copied her mail. I got copies of those intercepted letters in my c.a. 78-0320, for the assassination and assassination-related records of the Dallas FBI office.

I then learned that all those warm-hearted and generous American people got themselves in FBI files because of their kindness and caring. I do not now have access to those letters and other records because they are in our basement and I am not able to use stairs safely. But I do recall that a Trenton, New Jersey man and wife who could afford it, concerned by Marina's plight, invited her and her infants to come and live with them. That got them investigated by the FBI as though there were dangerous agents of the KGB. Which the FBI learned soon enough they were not.

This is by no means all the FBI paranoids did to Marina.

Hoover, who hated Chief Justice and Commission chairman Earl Warren, had lunch with him to inveigle the trusting Warren into taking responsibility for what Hoover wanted to do. He actually persuaded Warren that it was possible that Marina was part of some kind of red conspiracy and that she might flee the country. To be able to prevent this Hoover wanted to tap the phone on the house she had not yet even moved into. But for that he needed the attorney general's authorization. When Warren and the attorney general agreed, Hoover did more than have the FBI tap her phone. He bugged without seeking authority for that. So, still before Marina moved in, he had her house wired for sound

and so that if a pin dropped, Hoover could be made aware of it.

Hoover, who saw red whenever he looked at the blue sky, had launched the myth that became the official assassination mythology, that Oswald was the lone and the red assassin. Before Marina was bugged and wiretapped the FBI had the evidence that it then and ever since then misrepresented, the evidence that, despite the misuses and misrepresentations of it, established Oswald's innocence beyond reasonable question.

The FBI ignored this and it covered Marina's every word electronically using as a base vans near her home. The vans were staffed by FBI agents around the clock. They operated the equipment, taped every sound and kept logs of both her conversations and of her visitors.

Until it could no longer ignore the fact that it was all a paranoid futility that was taking and wasting the time of that crew of agents and was wasting much money for the FBI. Then it was ended.

The FBI also disliked Marina, as it dislikes any who stand up to it no matter how wrong the FBI is. As from such crazy political notions it was, and not infrequently.

While Marina was still in Secret Service captivity, she prepared a long statement for the government. (18H 548ff) The FBI did not like some of what she said and wanted her to say the opposite of some of it. She was not at all timid. For example, as I brought to light in my first book, which dates to 1965, she said in it,

"I am a little offended at the FBI agents who have been tormenting me every day with their trivial questions, some of which have nothing to do with Lee's case; for example, what sort of furniture we had in Russia, how many people lived in our house and their ages, not to mention questions about my friends and relatives. I think they should not count on my practically becoming their agent if I decide to stay and live in the United States. ..." (White-wash, pages 133-4)

To get her to say other than she had written out on her own, to say what the FBI wanted her to say, it gave her to understand that if she did not she would be deported. That, as without doubt it knew despite Hoover's pretenses

to get her wiretapped, was the last thing Marina wanted. So, having no real choice, she did what the FBI wanted her to do.

Senator Richard Russell, the most conservative of the Commission Members, was troubled by the fact that she contradicted herself so often. One example of this is her writing in her statement that she did not know that rifles came with what she referred to as "telescopes". But when she first testified to the Warren Commission and was shown the rifle said to have been Oswald's, she said, "Ah, that fateful rifle of Lee Harvey Oswald." That was a very quotable line and it was quoted.

(Senator Russell and I had a relationship I kept confidential as long as he lived not to embarrass him. He had refused to agree to the Report based on the magical single-bullet theory. Kentucky Senator John Sherman Cooper agreed with him. Neither ever changed his mind. Neither realized that in disagreeing with that basis of the Report he was refusing to agree that there was only one assassin. I go into the several plain dirty tricks played on Russell and Cooper to a limited degree in Whitewash IV, with some of the proof of their deliberateness on the parts of Commission General Counsel J. Lee Rankin and the chairman. I go into this in much greater detail with documents from the archives Russell and Cooper left, in a lengthy article that as of this writing is unpublished, "Senator Russell Dissents.")

To try to reconcile these conflicts ?Russell forced a special hearing to take additional testimony from her. Like all the hearings, it was held in secret. That one, however, was even more secret. It was at a Dallas military installation on September 6, 1963. In Whitewash I have a lengthy excerpt from her testimony about the FBI and its pressuring her. (pages 134-6) Here are a few excerpts from what she said about the FBI in it:

"...if I didn't want to answer they told me that if I wanted to live in this country I would have to help in this matter, even though [those questions] were often irrelevant. That is the FBI."

When she testified about the Immigration and Naturalization Service

adding to the FBI's pressures, she said of the INS official who did that,

"I was told that he had especially come from New York" to do that. "He even said that it would be better for me if I were to help them."

Actually, according to the FBI's own records that I got in U.A. 78-0322, she was not only correct in the FBI not trusting any local INS people to threaten Marina with deportation, she was correct in his having been brought all the way from New York and he was explicit: if she did not testify as she was wanted to testify, she would be deported.

Ultimately this not inconsiderable FBI pressure on her created a sink-or-swim situation for her. She could only imagine what fate awaited her back in Minsk but she knew it would risk those gulags and years in them. Her defying the FBI pressures at all took considerable courage and I think it can be said fairly, principle.

In the lawsuit in which I got those records I also got some copies of the paraphrases of her phone conversation. The FBI offered me the tapes. I declined to accept them. This was the FBI, remember, that fought tooth, nail and with repetitious perjury to avoid giving me anything at all. It stonewalled several of those cases for ten years. I knew that if I accepted those tapes, the FBI would be free to give them to anyone and everyone to be used to embarrass her by its stable of journalistic sycophants who were repaid for favors to the FBI by being given exclusive stories to which they could attribute no source.

Moreover, I did not have to imagine what she could have said when she did not know but she did not say a word the FBI did not record. I know from the paraphrases disclosed to me from other files.

She did have phone conversations with the older women of the Dallas-Fort Worth White Russian community and she did discuss her personal emotions, feeling and problems with them. It was private, personal women-talk that should have remained private. But the FBI did give me memos saying this that I never made any use of.

She also discussed legal and other personal problems with her lawyers and that also was nobody's business. Neither of the supposedly private matters should have been intercepted and preserved by any police. Not, at least, under basic and traditional American belief.

The FBI resented the truth she told and her resisting it and what it wanted of her. So, it would have been teaching her - and others - a lesson if it could get all those personal matters aired, particularly by those who use and misuse what the fbi wanted and would ignore what the FBI did not want public, like its entirely improper pressures on her.

It also resented her truthfulness about it.

Little by little she grew more courageous and more self-reliant.

She went to school outside of Dallas to learn and be able to use English well.

She married Kenneth Porter. He became the only father the girls knew. As the older daughter, June, who had been born in Minsk, told Steve ^aSalerno for a New York Times Magazine article that appeared on April 30, coinciding with the Powers review of Mailer's book. He asked her,

"If someone were to ask you who your father is, what would you say? Whom do you think of as dad?"

Her reply was,

"Kenneth. Now the word father does mean Lee to me. But dad is Dad."

At another point she told Salerno, "My father is Kenneth Porter, the man I grew up with, the man who was there for my mother and Rachel and me."

I learned more about Porter and the attention he gave those little girls from an impartial observer, Henry Wade, the then Dallas district attorney, is and was a friend. I like him as a person and I respect him as district attorney. In that position he took an oath to uphold the law. That oath did not say, unless you do not like the law. It was there when he put the requirement of the canons of the bar above his desire to get a conviction and saw to

it that justice was done. That is not exactly commonplace and it earns respect.

Henry was popular. He was reelected regularly until a massive heart attack caused him not to run. He had a farm near where the Porters live not far from Dallas.

On days Porter did not have to work, when the weather permitted it and the children wanted it, he took them to the pond on Henry's farm. They swam or fished and enjoyed themselves.

When there was work to be done on the farm, and Porter was aware of it, particularly work on the buildings, without being asked he went over and pitched in.

He not only treated those girls as he did his own son by Marina, he showed them by precept what good people do, how they are helpful to each other. In every sense, as June said, he was their father.

Over the years Marina has been interviewed countless times by countless people. She came to believe that Lee did not kill the President. Apparently she hoped to convince some of the interviewers of that. It also seems that she had hoped to learn new facts from them. Whether or not she came to realize it, they exploited her.

Which is what Schiller and Mailer had in mind. She put up with them for five days of the most indecent kind of questioning, including the kind of questioning she had told the FBI was not relevant. And then, on the fifth day, she told them off, telling them they were "^{pervverts/}sex maniacs." She did that when she knew they were writing a book and could get even with her in what

they wrote. But as with the FBI, she was not timid. She did not fear that Mailer would add to the nastiness he had already written about her or, if she did fear it, she had reached the point where she would not accept any more of it and told them off to their faces.

This pair of commercializing necrologists also have in common the sexist attitude that what is right for the male is wrong for the female.

They make it clear that for a man to have sex with a woman who is not his wife is fine but that for a woman to have sex with a man who is not her husband is wrong and she should be condemned for it - or for only suspicion of it - as the man should not be.

This perverted attitude dominates their thinking and their writing as to the degree we have seen.

It is necessary to understand their attitude to understand what can be understood about a vbook so astoundingly dishonest in concept and writing, with no concern at all for the usual standards of ethics, decency, morality and truth.

It also is necessary to understand, to never forget when Mailer writes anything at all about the crime or its investigation, whether that be his own or what he takes from the like-minded others, that neither he nor Schiller knows or has attempted to learn what is factually established about the crime and its investigations. This is something the average person would never think any responsible and established writer would do but Mailer is not unique in that. Merely more flagrant.

So, understanding the attitudes that dominated some of what Mailer wrote for his misbegotten scam of the public mind and the strangeness of it to normal, moral, ethical and principled people who tend to believe the printed word extends this into the irrational, sometimes the impossible.

It is also necessary to understand, if if Mailer's Tales is to be understood, that they are a pair of world-class monsters with their own ethics and beliefs, if either word is not inappropriate, each having individually and their having together records of successful commercializations. In which they were capable of and they did whatever they regarded as necessary to what for them was success.

With their records they had every reason to believe that they could pull it off again. The uncritical and laudatory reviews and other major attention

to Mailer's Tales and to him indicate that they did.

If reference to them as monsters is regarded as excessive, it should then be remembered that neither of them made the slightest effort to learn what the established fact of the assassination is yet they are selling a book in which they pretend they have solved it by their version of what they say is Oswald's life. Details of their other deliberate dishonesties on this will follow. But how can any rational man say and believe that there is any rational way of solving the assassination other than by the evidence? Which, as I report at the beginning, Mailer lied himself around by saying it is "impenetrable." What exists is far from impenetrable, and that also will be without question in what follows. But the point is that unless he is certifiably crazy, Mailer has to know that what he says and says he did is impossible.

When his commercialization is of the assassination of a President, that is the work of a monster and what he did is monstrous.

Given the opportunities he had and he made, there was little limit to what he was capable of and did. Without regard for what they say about him. He has gotten away with so much for so many years he may not even care what he says as long as it has enough shock value to get him attention.

Whether or not he enjoys it, as he seems to, unless he has a knife in his hands, attention to him and what he says pays off in lecture fees and in book sales. Attention to his books has the same effect. So, the many crazy things he does and says may be crazy like a fox.

Steve of ace

The Boston Globe regarded the appearance of this desecration of our history as an event of such momentous importance that on May 2 it devoted more than 300 square inches of story and pictures to it. With, as became the style with him and perhaps represented Mailer's desire, a picture of him suggesting deep and agonizing thought.

It was not a review of Mailer's Tales to which the Globe devoted so much space that issue. This was important enough to send staff writer Will Haygood from Boston to the old brownstone house in which Mailer lived and wrote in Brooklyn, New York.

Haygood interviewed Mailer. Mailer told him, "My one obsession is the Kennedy assassination," so the Globe, somehow not thinking of an exclamation point, had "MAILER OBSESSED" atop the story as it began on the first page of its Living/Arts section.

Liking the angle Mailer gave it, the subhead is "The author travels to Minsk and Texas to bring Oswald out of the shadows." That neither Mailer nor Haygood did.

That page also has a subheading in fairly large type, another quote of Mailer and another fiction the Globe adopted without question, it having come from the great Mailer himself, "People want to keep Oswald small. I don't know why."

Again the Globe did not question this fiction that Mailer made up in an effort to make his rehash appear to have a significance it does not have. It is not "Oswald's Tale," it is Oswald Stale.

But for its headline, the Globe liked that obsession line best of all, repeating it on the carry-over that takes up half of a page, "Obsessed by Oswald, Mailer goes around the Globe."

To the degree this suggests that Mailer was going in circles, it is apt.

Do you know anyone who wants "to keep Oswalds small"? I do not. Besides, how small can a man accused of assassinating a President be "kept"? Or as

Mailer, ^{says,} ~~worker~~, made over into. This is hogwash but it made a headline in the prestigious Globe.

The Globe, with the modern newspaper macho, was not satisfied with the innumerable Mailer pictures readily available from the photo agencies. So the Globe added to its cost by also sending a staff photographer, ~~Ma~~rk Wilson. The three pictures he took that were used are in no way unusual, for Mailer, that is. One nine inches high on the first page of the section shows him hand to side of face, eyes squinting a bit, seemingly deep in thought. Another shows him sitting at a table in his library with a pair of clothed human skeletons nearby. His hands are turning pages of paper at which he is not looking. He is looking into space. And the third shows him standing at the top of the stairs in the top floor of his home near a ladder leading to the roof, with a painting by his wife behind the ladder. He has a half smile on his face as with his right hand on top of the post he is looking down the stairs.

Big deal sending along a photographer to take such pictures the paper credits to itself, not to any news agency. From one of which it got the Oswald picture it uses.

Big deal in the story, too. It reports, probably with Mailer himself as the source, that Oswald is "Longtime Mailer Obsession." After which it says he spent "years and years researching and writing about the CIA." His writing may have taken a long time but it reflects no "research" on the CIA, only ignorance about it.

For this book Mailer says he had an additional motive, "KGB secrets". As we saw, he got none and thus his Mailer Oswald in Minsk turned out to be a nothing, nothing at all legitimately newsworthy.

Mailer is quoted again on what motivates him, his version of that, "My one obsession is the Kennedy assassination." As we have seen, he reflected this by refusing to even take a free look at thousands of pages that had been kept secret.

What should have alerted an even slightly informed reporter is that, to use one of his own favorite words, Mailer was bullshitting him. After some mumbojumbo about Oswald in Minsk and his coming book, not even a decent paraphrase of what has never been secret, always well known and in most books beginning with mine of 1965, thirty years earlier, Mailer told Haygood, the reporter he was turning into his flack, that after Minsk "He went looking for Marina Oswald. He found (sic) her in, of all places, Dallas."

"Found" her there? That is as secret as the daily paper. She has been there, not in Dallas as Mailer says but not far away, in Rockwall, for the more than 20 years since she married Kenneth Porter. She was public in innumerable interviews from there. So, hunter that he was, it was Mailer who "found" her where she has been in public ever since before the assassination.

When he gets into his knowledge of the assassination and its investigations, remember, that has been his "obsession" for all those years, he flaunts his ignorance and puts his shrink hat on again. He told Haygood of the shooting, "An 'old Negro' man later testified he saw Oswald calmly rub his hand back through his hair before firing." This is entirely fiction. There was no such witness and no such testimony. That Mailer is so ignorant of the established fact is a further indication that what he cites of the Commission's evidence he does not cite from the knowledge of it he obtained from his own work. Mailer is also ignorant of all accounts of the shooting. First of all, nobody even claimed to have seen the actual shooting. And the official story itself is that rather than being able to "calmly rub his hand back through his hair before firing" Oswald, the Commission's lone assassin that Mailer adopted as his own, had only a split second in which to both aim and fire the first shot. That alone precluded having either hand not on the rifle. But Mailer wanted Oswald to be calm in his story so he just made this up.

Then the shrinkery, "If he escapes he can go on and live, but no one would know about it. If he's caught and stands trial he will be able to talk

to the world."

Just before this regurgitation of the earliest amateur shrinkery in support of the official mythology, that Oswald was the assassin because that made him important somehow, is one of those endless and self-exposing stupidities that erupt from him every time he talks. The Mailerism Haygood next quotes how Mailer undermining the basis for his book. That basis, remember, is what he "decided" without any investigation, that Oswald was the assassin. Without that, as Mailer well knows, there would be no basis for any interest in Oswald. Certainly not enough interest to go to all the trouble and expense for a party of more than him and Schiller to go to, travel in, pay all the people to be interviewed in addition to paying the KGB, and living in Russia and Belarus for half a year.

For Mailer to have this book - indeed, any book- it must be without question that Oswald was the assassin, whether or not alone. Mailer has insisted he was the assassin without any question at all for at least the 23 years of his statements of which I have a record without looking further than the file of what others sent me. If he was ever quoted saying anything else, particularly once he and Random House started hippodroming this book, I have not seen or heard it or had it reported to me. If he ever said anything else he confesses his book is a deliberate fraud beginning with its concept.

But he did admit it is a fraud to Haygood who was too uninformed to pick it up. He merely reported it:

"Mailer, who is '75 percent sure' Oswald killed Kennedy, believes Oswald went almost rapturously toward his date with his own destiny."

Not only is this more of the crudest and unoriginal amateurish phony shrinkery, it is entirely disproved by the official evidence itself, it is a confession that his book is a put-together ^{age} packing of phoniness.

The book requires the absolute certainty of Oswald's guilt. No ifs, no buts, no percentages. *Much as Mailer liked this line and used it else where.*

Aside from his ignorance of the established fact of the assassination that characterizes every word that Mailer utters or writes, ~~that~~ the uncertainty he confessed to Haygood is his self-exposure as a fraud. He confesses to being a fraud as an assassination expert, as writer and as a person. This is also his own self-characterization as a commercializer of the great tragedy of the assassination and as Schiller's mere creature in his fraud of a book.

Mailer also blabbed to Haygood that Marina had the courage to express her contempt for his book and for him for all the five days of Schiller's outrageously subhuman persecution of her in the guise of interviews. After she read parts from which I quote earlier, and these are Haygood's words quoting Mailer about Marina, she is:

"... Reasonably well educated. Speaks English fluently. Speaks very quickly. She is sardonic as hell. When she read the part of the book about Minsk, she said, 'Well, Tolstoy it's not,' Mailer laughs."

Funny it's not, too.

(Illustrative of how Mailer is capable of saying anything that at any time appears to serve a purpose he sees or imagines is part of this quotation from what he told Haygood. He told Haygood that Marina was "reasonably well educated," referring to formal education. But on page 21 he says she had "no more than a vocational education" and that was completed before she left Lenin-grad, when she was only 18.

(The other sentence that springs from this page is another of the endless Mailer indictments of Mailer as a dishonest man and a dishonest writer. Having made all he made about the false accusation that Marina was a loose woman and as part of her looseness primped and painted, especially her lips. Mailer establishes his personal knowledge that he knew that accusation was false yet used it as part of his campaign to defame her:

"... Just a sweet eighteen-year-old, Marina had a natural color to her lips, and never used lipstick.")

Despite the endless praises of the hacks who write most of the inter-

views, there is nothing of any kind of value in Oswald in Minsk, as we have seen and as Mailer himself recognized when he finished it. This is true of both versions attributed to him, either that he recognized this by the time he finished the interviews there and got all he got from the KGB or that he recognized his bankruptcy after he wrote Oswald in Minsk.

Only the endless sycophancy of all the major media which persists in its endorsement of the official assassination mythology prevented Mailer's being ridiculed into permanent silence over his fraud of a book in which he confesses his own inability to do anything original in his writing about the assassination after all those years of his "obsession" with it. And not only can he do nothing original, when he does his cut-and-paste job with the work of others only a trashy counterfeit of what was already published is the best he can do with it, as we soon see.

Few writers, whether or not as honored for their writing as Mailer, have ever confessed so obviously to being ignorant, incompetent, unimaginative and insensitive about it all as Mailer.

For which the major media unites in praising him to the skies, with very few exceptions, like Kakutani in the daily Times. In his well-expressed contempt for Mailer's writing, Kakutani does not even refer to Mailer's gross ignorance and total incompetence when he writes about the assassination itself.

So, what I reflect in the foregoing paragraphs of this chapter is what the reader should have in mind in evaluating what else there is to say about Mailer and his fraud of a book, a book that at best is a cheap novel counterfeited as nonfiction, as the account of the Mailer who has been "obsessed" with it from the first.

In fact, Mailer as much as said this in his promotional appearance on the ABC-TV Good Morning American show on April 27. Like Mailer, ABC merely assumed Oswald's guilt. But in a moment of aberrational honesty, Mailer responded to one of the cream-puff questions he was asked by saying that in the book he

"looks at Oswald as a character in a novel."

The New Yorker's adaptation was prepared with the little wisdom required to eliminate entirely the unprincipled and baseless Schiller/Mailer attack on Marina. As I read it, I was impressed by its total lack of any value, literary or historical. What Mailer has and thus that part of his book that is new is meaningless trivia from the KGB surveillance tape transcripts. Meaningless except for the disclosure in them that essentially the newly-wed Oswalds were pretty much like other newly-weds in both their lighter moments and in the scraps except for Marina's uneasiness on leaving her own country for a distant and strange one. For a young woman so young that she was not old enough to vote in this country, there is nothing abnormal in her uneasiness. Nor would there have been if she had been mature. From this I deduced correctly that when the book appeared it would be junk, as it was.

Marina's uneasiness is normal, it could and would have been assumed and it has no relationship to the book Mailer announced and said he wrote. It is merely more of the padding that has no real relevance.

What did take my attention is the amateru^uishness of Mailer's amateru shrinkery. What I found¹ most indecent in that is his outrageous invention that Marina was plagued with guilt. Over what, Mailer does not say. There is a good reason for that: he just made it up. There was nothing over which she should feel guilty, unless it was for the judgment reflected in even seeing, leave alone being interviewed for so long by Schiller and Mailer. There was nothing at all over which she had any reason for feeling any guilt. It is at best merely despicable for Mailer to make that up and give it such wide distribution. Here is the concluding paragraph:

She sits in a chair, a tiny woman in her early fifties, her thin shoulders hunched forward in such pain of spirit under such a mass

of guilt that one would comfort her as one would hug a child. What is left of what was once her beauty are her extraordinary eyes, blue as diamonds, and they blaze with light as if, in divine compensation for the dead weight of all that will not cease to haunt her, she has been granted a spark from the hour of an apocalypse others have not seen. Perhaps it is the light offered to victims who have suffered like the gods.

If there is any possible meaning in the last sentence, it refers to Marina's vicitization by the Schiller/Mailer commercialization of all the assassination tragedies that their "sex ^{pervert} ~~maniac~~" questioning of her told her was coming and would get wide distribution in the book and in any uses made of it to promote it.

But that "mass of guilt" did not exist, there was no reason for it to exist and there was no reason for Mailer to invent it and attribute it to her. Other than the money he expected from such touches in his commercialization.

After reading what The New Yorker considered of most importance in the coming book, I knew that reading it word-for-word would be a waste of time. As soon as I opened the book this was confirmed.

After his "appreciation" to Schiller and to Judith McNally, Mailer's assistant, which is a short paragraph on an otherwise blank page, is this, alone on the next right-hand page:

Representative Boggs. Why did your son defect to Russia?
Marguerite Oswald. I cannot answer that yes or no sir. I am going to go through the whole story or it is no good. And that is what I have been doing for this Commission all day long-- giving a story.

Representative Boggs. Suppose you just make it very brief.
Marguerite Oswald. I cannot make it brief. I will say I am unable to make it brief. This is my life and my son's life going down in history.

--from Marguerite Oswald's
Warren Commission testimony,
February 10, 1964

What importance Mailer imagined in this is neither apparent nor is it stated. But that Mailer liked it and imagined he saw something in it is clear from his repetition of it on page 789, two pages from the last page of the text of the book. There in feigned defense of Marguerite Oswald, the woman he ridiculed along with so many others, Mailer actually blames her for the

assassination by adding to this quote his own words. Having ordained Oswald the assassin, Mailer concludes his less than complimentary comments about his mother:

"...it seems certain at the least that every malformation, or just about, of Lee Harvey Oswald's character has its roots in her."

Or, Marguerite made of her son a man who could assassinate the President.

There Mailer refers to the Commission's attitude toward Marguerite as a "barely concealed animus." Not explaining this subjects it to the same interpretation, the Commission regarded her as somehow responsible for the assassination.

Boggs' question as Mailer makes this selection is not even reasonable and does seem to attribute at least some knowledge to Marguerite. How else could she know "Why did your son defect to Russia."

Which Oswald was careful not to do and which the embassy joined in seeing to it that he did not do.

As noted earlier, the table of contents announced that in this work of presumed nonfiction, and on such a subject, important as the subject, if not this desecration of it is, there is no index.

However it happened that there is no index, its absence serves the valuable purpose for Mailer and for Random House of making it more difficult to make a real examination or a real study of the book.

An exhaustive job would require many large volumes. That is neither possible nor necessary. More than enough of the truth, the grim and enormously disgusting truth, can be made by spotting and examining parts and passages of it. That is what follows.